

City of Berwyn

# PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

## EXISTING CONDITIONS REPORT

DRAFT MAY 2015



# Section 1: Introduction and Background

The City of Berwyn is undertaking a process to evaluate their parking system, with the goal of improving the livability and vitality of the Depot District. The result of this project will be a series of recommended policies to help the City address identified parking problems.

## 1.1 Purpose of the existing conditions report

The existing conditions report is a critical first step in any planning process – laying the groundwork from which recommendations will ultimately be made. To properly address current parking issues in Berwyn’s Depot District, it is important to understand how local stakeholders perceive parking. Additionally, having thorough on-the-ground knowledge of the existing supply and parking occupancy rates, as well as general transportation information, will help inform the strategies that are ultimately developed as a result of this research. This report details the findings of the research, data gathered, and interviews conducted over a three-month period. The Existing Conditions Report is organized in the following sections:

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## 1.2 Why does the Depot District need a parking review?

The Depot District was originally designed when most people walked to amenities like stores, schools, and parks. While Berwyn has retained the historic building density in the core, the types of businesses and shops have changed over the years. The Depot District now has a very strong medical presence, with MacNeal hospital and many doctors' offices. There are also restaurants, bars, and specialty shops, but the impacts on parking demand are more strongly caused by the ebb and flow of medical workers. Balancing the needs of local businesses, restaurants, rail commuters, medical employees, residents, and visitors is no small feat. In addition to customer parking needs, there are many employees arriving by car. There is a high demand for long-term parking and the options available are either perceived by many as inconvenient or too expensive. Additionally, many employees have discovered that there is not strict enforcement of the 2-hour time limits, so they take advantage of that and shuffle their cars – or leave them parked illegally most of the day without repercussion.

## 1.3 How does parking affect a neighborhood?

The supply and management of parking influence the character, form, function and flow of a community. Too little supply makes the downtown unattractive to potential businesses; mismanaged supply keeps prime spaces full while spaces further from the core stay vacant. Too much parking can increase the demand for parking, causing more people to decide to drive, resulting in increased traffic congestion. An oversupply of surface parking can negatively impact the built environment by creating large gaps between buildings, rendering walking and bicycling unpleasant and unsafe.

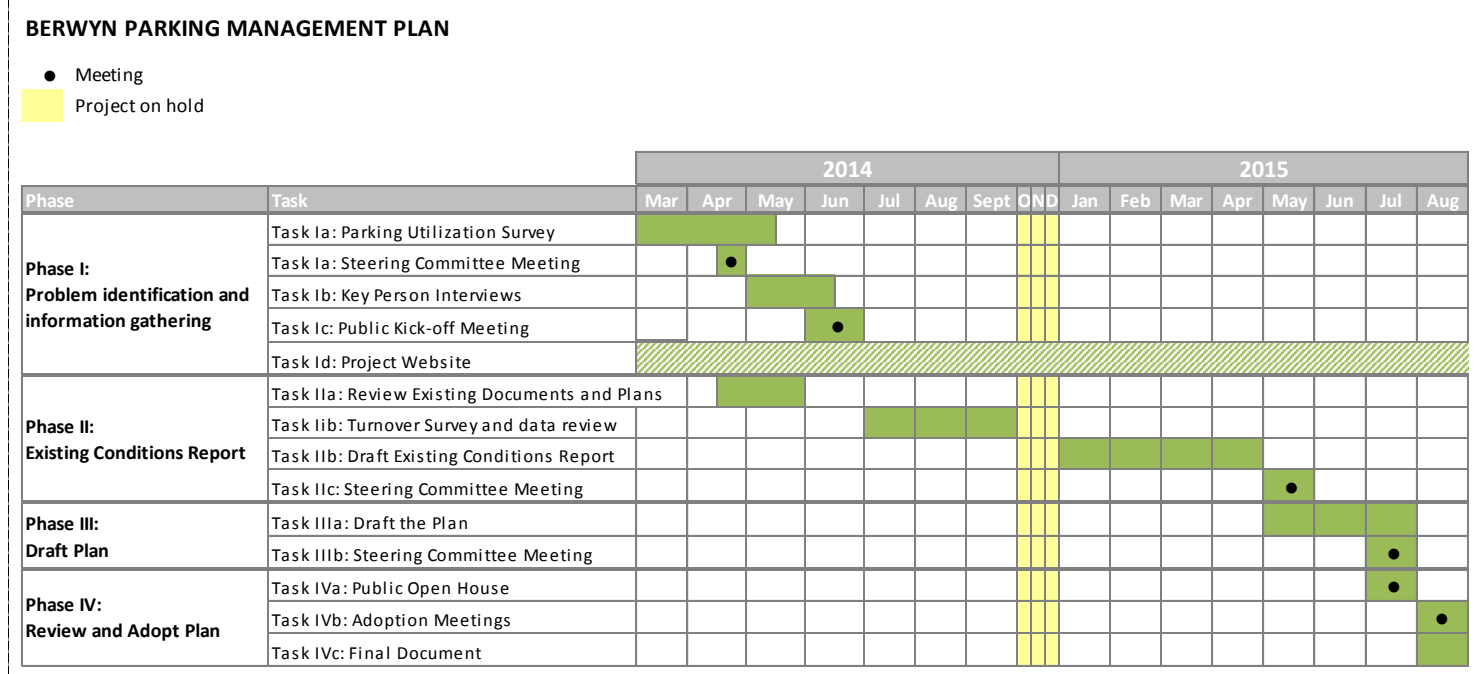
Over the last several decades, the types of business in the Depot District have changed and so have the habits of customers. More people are driving, and shopping trips may take longer than they did in the past. People rarely think to walk to the store, even if it just a short walk away. Additionally, many employees and Metra commuters are arriving from locations outside of Berwyn, often by car.

As communities grow, their parking needs and demands also undergo transformations, requiring different types of parking management. Addressing any parking problems should be part of a comprehensive multi-modal transportation system plan. Berwyn's 2012 Comprehensive Plan noted the need for various parking strategies and inspired the process to develop this plan. Driving and parking make up just one facet of a community's transportation infrastructure. While cars will continue to be the primary mode of transportation for many, small increases in the mode share of more active forms of transportation — like walking, bicycling, and transit — can help alleviate parking problems, while helping residents lead healthier lives.

## 1.4 Project process and next steps

Phases one and two of the project process involve a thorough analysis of the existing conditions within the community using information gathered through one-on-one stakeholder interviews, steering committee meetings, review of previous studies, and collection of maps and data (Figure 1). The results of these steps are presented in this report, with expanded information in the supplemental background research section. Phase three will focus on identifying appropriate strategies for parking management in the Depot District based on findings from this report and stakeholder input, and then combining efforts from previous phases to create the parking management plan document containing policies, programs, and action steps recommended to assist Berwyn in achieving the future vision.

Figure 1. Project timeline



## Section 2: Community Outreach

A primary goal of Berwyn's Depot District Parking Plan is to ensure active engagement of all stakeholders throughout the planning and decision-making process. One challenge to solving Berwyn's Depot District parking problems is agreeing on the problem in the first place. To that end, a number of engagement activities were designed to better understand the community's perspective on the parking problems and potential solutions.

### 2.1 Key Findings

- Most people expressed that there is parking congestion between 7:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and around shift change time (nursing staff changes over at 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.).
- Employees of downtown businesses and the hospital compete with customers for parking spaces.
- There are many different parking zones and rates, making it confusing for drivers to know where they can park.
- Local employees are parking in the 2-hour on-street parking designated for customers and move their cars every 2 hours.
- Safety is important to local residents; the community is open to active transportation options and desire infrastructural improvements and safer conditions.
- Not enough parking, inefficient use of existing parking spaces, and commuter parking management were identified as the biggest challenges among survey participants, while employers parking in spaces intended for customers and inefficient residential permit system followed. About 14 respondents (10% of the total) said that Berwyn does not have any parking challenges.

- More parking available on-street was survey respondents' top priority, while more balanced usage of existing spaces came in as participants' second priority.
- Survey respondents overwhelmingly stated that overhauling commuter parking regulations should be a priority action for the City of Berwyn to take.

## 2.2 Community Engagement Process

CMAP worked with City staff and elected officials, to interview key community leaders, engage the business community, and reach the public at-large with an online survey. The following provides a summary of what has been learned so far, as outreach activities will continue over the course of the planning process. Since the start of the formal planning process, over 172 residents and stakeholders have participated in the community engagement process. Additional outreach information is included in the Supplemental Background Research section.

### 2.2.1 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is tasked with providing guidance and feedback on existing issues and opportunities, developing central goals, reviewing plan documents, and identifying stakeholders who should be involved in the planning process. Composed of individuals representing a wide variety of interests and perspectives, the Steering Committee members include:

- John Aranza, Roosevelt Road Business Association
- Nicole Campbell, City of Berwyn
- Mike Christensen, MacNeal Hospital
- Marcia Cohen, Berwyn Police Department
- Jeff Janda, Berwyn Park District
- Beverly Pastorek, Depot District Special Events Committee
- Margaret Paul, City of Berwyn
- Kurtis Pozgay, Berwyn Development Corporation (BDC)
- Laurie Richter, Depot District Merchants Association
- David Kralik, Metra
- Joe Santangelo, Berwyn Police Department

The first steering committee meeting was held on May 1, 2014 at the BDC offices. The goal of this meeting was to introduce members to the project and gather feedback regarding issues and opportunities for improving parking in the Depot District. The steering committee discussed strengths of the community and what they would like to see addressed in the plan. Committee members recommended

working with the Depot District Merchants Association and the Depot District Events Planning Committee to talk to business owners about their parking concerns. The committee discussed parking enforcement issues, misunderstanding of parking options and costs, and the need for more designated customer parking along with providing different paying options.

CMAF presented the steering committee a draft questionnaire and asked the committee members to fill it out. The questionnaire was revised based on the committee's feedback and used in the online community survey.

## 2.2.2 Key person interviews

In order to gain further insight into parking issues and opportunities that exist in Berwyn's Depot District, CMAF staff conducted interviews with 19 individuals representing a variety of interests throughout the community. Individuals ranged from institutional and neighborhood leaders to business owners to elected officials to residents. The conversations were designed to be confidential in order to promote an open dialogue. Several broad themes emerged.

Conversations and interviews were conducted with the following organizations and businesses:

- Alderman Jeffrey Boyajian
- Alderman Margaret Paul
- Alderman Nona Chapman
- A.W.E.S.O.M.E Pest Service Inc.
- Berwyn Development Corporation
- Berwyn Foot & Ankle Center
- Berwyn Park District
- Berwyn Police Department
- Carla's Place
- City of Berwyn Staff
- Classic Touch Hair Designers
- Depot District Merchants Association
- Depot District Special Events Committee
- Fly Right Gifts
- Heritage Funeral Home
- Horrorbles
- James Joyce Pub
- La Notte Café
- Liberty Tax
- MacNeal Hospital
- Primary Care Associates
- Rissi's Old Time Candy, Toys & Ice Cream Parlour

A common theme that arose from interviews was that it is difficult to find a parking spot in the Depot District during the hospital hours, particularly around the morning and evening rush hours. Nearly everyone expressed that employees in the Depot District park in the free parking spaces intended for customers and move their cars to avoid citations. Interviewees also cited an imbalance between the supply and demand of parking. The parking supply immediately surrounding the hospital is not enough to meet the needs of MacNeal Hospital and Primary Care Associates; the remote hospital parking remains significantly underutilized. Some linked this challenge to the misunderstanding of parking zones; others expressed that the City's partnership with Metra in the municipal parking facility limits the City's ability to manage and regulate parking rates.

Some interviewees said that the lack of available parking around the hospital has made it difficult to bring in customers and visitors, putting strains on the economic vitality of the Depot District. The outdated parking meters and lack of parking enforcement were cited as contributing to the problem. Some believe that there is a need for more parking. Residents and business owners feel as though some areas get ticketed and others do not. While there are mixed feelings about enforcement, whether it is ticketing too much or not enough, some seem to think enforcement has gotten better.

Collectively, the community stakeholders interviewed brought up many similar needs, such as educating the public on parking options to ease parking confusion, improving parking management, improving consistency of enforcement, and replacing parking meters with pay boxes. Most interviewees want to improve the existing parking before creating additional parking. They want to see parking integrated into future streetscaping with improvements for cyclists and pedestrians in order to support active and public transportation. One business owner has established a relationship with a local church to share parking so the church can use his parking as overflow on Sundays, and he can use the church's parking during his business hours.

Overall, stakeholders would like the City to work with employers to improve access and attract commuters and visitors to the Depot District. Suggestions included developing an employee incentive program that would encourage and reward public transit use as well as active transportation and encouraging employees to purchase parking permits. They emphasized working with MacNeal Hospital to identify parking solutions to address the needs of hospital employees while maintaining the needs of commuters, visitors, and customers.

### 2.2.3 Business Owner Interviews

A business-focused workshop was held on June 12, 2014 during a Berwyn Depot District Business Association meeting at Mission House Café. Due to limited business owner attendance, the meeting was opened to non-association members to garner additional input. In a continued effort to engage business owners, CMAP partnered with BDC, the Berwyn Depot District Business Association, and the Berwyn Depot Special Events Committee to promote the survey questionnaire to business owners.

A common theme that arose among business owners was an imbalance of parking options in the Depot District. Currently, Depot District employees find themselves competing with commuters for parking in the municipal garage or with customers in the free 2-hour parking areas. Business owners believe this has contributed to store vacancies in the Depot District as it is difficult to get customers when parking in front of their businesses is always full. Parking availability becomes more an issue during business hours, starting as early as 7 a.m. to around 2 - 4 p.m.

While most business owners agree that the cost to park is cheap, they think Depot Permits are too expensive for most employees to buy on their salaries, and too expensive for employers to realistically subsidize for employees. When most people can find a parking spot for free, even if they have to circle the block, it does not make sense to pay for parking. Currently, employers do not offer financial incentives to their employees for transit use or non-motorized travel. They are interested in the concept but concerned about cost. Lack of enforcement in the Depot District was another common theme that arose among business owners. Some owners only see enforcement in certain parts of the Depot.

Collectively, business owners brought up many similar needs, such as creating better parking options for customers and employees, educating the public on the different parking options and costs, improved utilization of commuter parking, encouraging alternative modes of transportation to promote cycling and walking, and supporting better communication with the City and police enforcement to be more customer-friendly.

## 2.2.4 Community Survey

CMAP developed a community survey to engage people who were unable to attend meetings. This was particularly important given the low number of participants at the public open house. The community survey served to educate the community about the purpose of the project and learn about priorities and preferred choices for addressing parking issues as well as public and active transportation in the Depot District. The survey was available from May 15, 2014 to September 15, 2014. During this time, 127 people provided detailed feedback on the challenges, priorities, and opportunities to help address parking management.

CMAP staff worked with steering committee members and local businesses to promote the survey to residents, customers and shop pers, as well as employees. The online survey was also distributed by City staff during the City of Berwyn's City sticker purchase, and was accessible through the City's website and promoted in local newsletters as well as through participants who attended previous public meetings.

The majority of respondents indicated that they were Berwyn Depot District residents (42.7 percent) and visitors who shop in t he Depot (24 percent). Not all participants responded to the demographic questions. Overall, participants were older (38.5 percent were between the age of 41-55), composed mostly of women (72.8 percent), and more identified as White (71.7 percent) than the community at large.

More details of the survey responses are in the Supplemental Background Research section.

## Section 3: Existing Parking Conditions

This section has three parts: (1) an overview of the parking supply available in the Depot District and the associated parking restrictions and parking permits that are in use, (2) the results of a parking occupancy survey which counted the number of vehicles parked on-street and off-street at various times of day, and (3) the results of a parking turnover survey in a central area of the District over the course of eight hours.

### 3.1 Key Findings

- There are approximately 2,000 parking spaces that can be used by the general public at various times of day, with various permits, and for differing lengths of stay
- Most of the parking (excluding MacNeal's private parking supply) averages around 40 percent occupied, indicating excess capacity.
- The Depot District experiences the most parking congestion around noon
- Parking congestion is mostly limited to Stanley Avenue, Windsor Avenue, and Clinton Avenue (south of the tracks) around the Berwyn Metra station
- The supply of on-street parking and off-street parking is evenly balanced



- 12-hour metered parking south of the tracks has the highest average occupancy rates, while 12-hour metered parking north of the tracks has the lowest average occupancy rates
- The lower three levels of the public parking garage are well-utilized from mid-morning until early afternoon

Within the Depot District study area, there is a good balance of on-street (53%) and off-street parking spaces (47%). There are, however, many restrictions on the various parking spaces in the Depot District. For people who park for more than a few hours, they must either purchase a permit, park further from the core area, find arrangements with their local employer, or park in short-term spaces and illegally move their car to avoid tickets. Without adequate enforcement of short-term spaces, extended stay parkers (usually area employees, sometimes commuters) will occupy prime on-street spaces and make it difficult for others to find a parking spot.

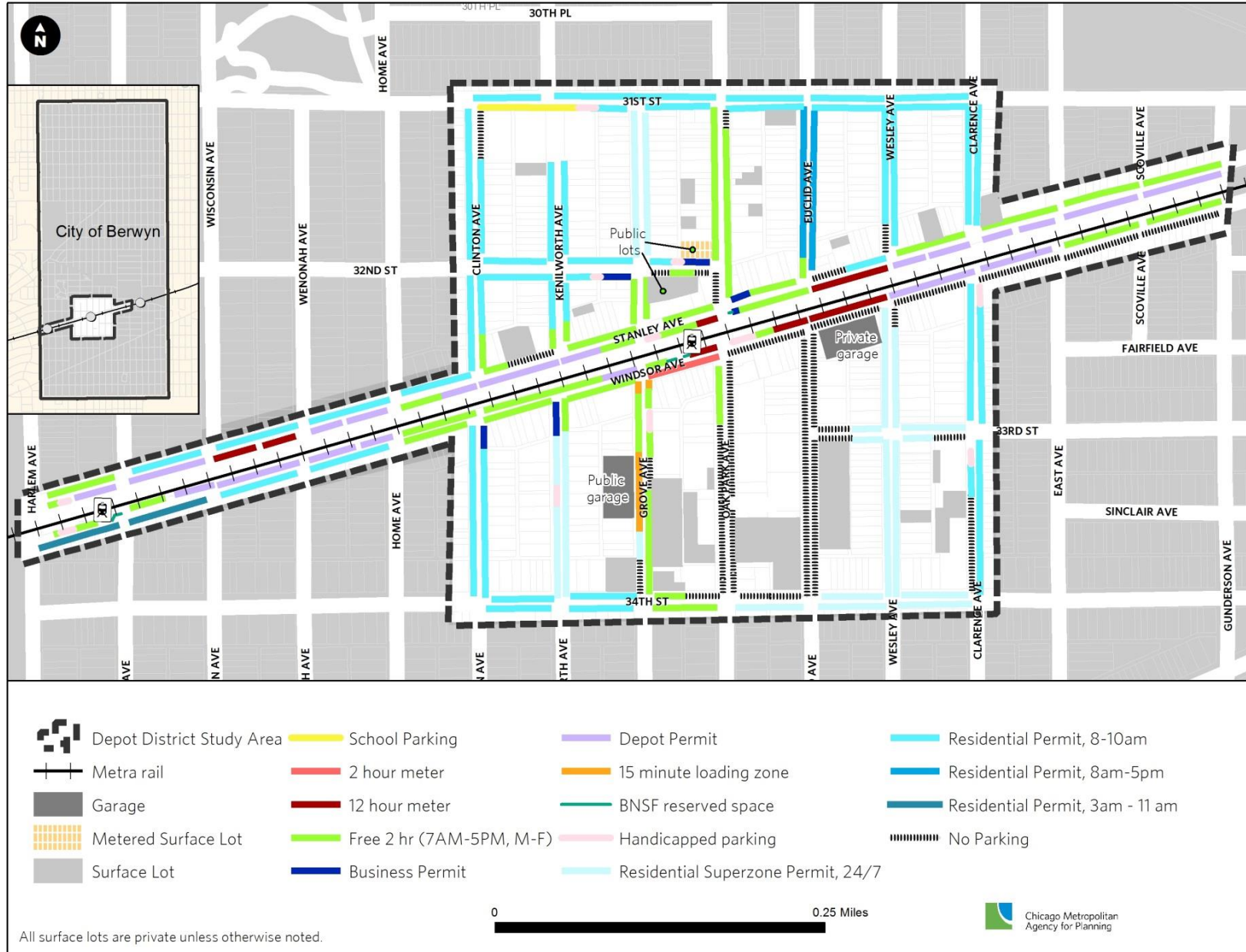
Some parking spaces in the study area are zoned for school use only, some for loading, and some for people with mobility impairments (Figure 2). For analysis purposes and to simplify the information, those spaces that are not available to a broad spectrum of visitors, residents, or employees are not included in every chart.

The approximate breakdown of the 3,638 parking spaces is shown in the map below and in Table 1.

**Table 1. Parking Supply breakdown**

Type	Spaces
Loading Zone	9
School	11
2 HR Metered	20
Residential Parking 3am-11am, all days	22
Business Permit	29
Handicapped	29
Residential Parking 8am - 5pm, M-F	52
12 HR Metered	122
Superzone Residential	258
Depot Permit, 6am - 6pm, M-F	332
Free 2 HR	464
Residential Parking 8am - 10am, M-F	636
Metered Surface Lot	26
Private Surface Lot	788
Private Garage	465
Public Garage	375
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,638</b>

Figure 2. Study Area Parking Supply



## 3.2 Description of parking categories

**Loading Zone:** These spaces are reserved for vehicles in the process of loading and unloading passengers or goods, with their flashers one from 7:00 am to 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday, for a maximum of 15 or 30 minutes, as indicated on signage.

**School:** These spaces are reserved for employees of Emerson Elementary school in the study area.

**2-hour Metered:** These spaces are on the south side of Windsor Avenue between Oak Park Avenue and Grove Avenue. They are metered spaces that are paid for through an electronic pay box. Anyone can park here for two hours or less and the cost to park is \$0.25 / hour. They are enforced from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. On the weekends and between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., anyone may park here for free.

**Business Permit:** These spaces are reserved for local employees, and require a business parking permit that can be obtained through the local police department for \$225 per year, with proof of employment in Berwyn.

**Handicapped:** These spaces are reserved for drivers displaying a handicapped parking placard, or with appropriate license plates.

**12-hour Metered:** The 12 hour metered spaces, found along the railroad tracks on Windsor Avenue and Stanley Avenue, are intended for Metra commuters and are owned by BNSF. They require a driver to deposit a minimum of 12 quarters for 4 hours of parking and cost \$0.25/ hour for each additional hour.

### Residential Parking Zones

From BerwynPD.com:

“Resident Parking Only between the hours of 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m. is in effect citywide. This restriction is in place seven (7) days a week and is in addition to any other parking restrictions posted on the block. Any non-resident who parks on any street in the City will be ticketed, unless an official visitor’s pass is properly displayed.

Berwyn residents are responsible for providing visitor passes for any non-residents who visit their homes during the time period when residential only parking is in effect. Each household on a street designated “Resident Permit Parking Only” may obtain one (1) complimentary Visitor Pass per household each year. Visitor Passes are issued on an annual basis and are effective July 1 and expire June 30 the following year. Visitor Passes are issued at the Parking Division (located at the Berwyn Police Department) and require the resident to show proof of purchase of a current vehicle sticker. If the resident does not own a vehicle, the resident must produce two documents proving residency in Berwyn.”

**Residential Parking 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., M-F:** These spaces are found on Euclid Avenue between Stanley Avenue and 31<sup>st</sup> Street. These spaces require drivers to display a City of Berwyn residential parking pass between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The intent of this restriction is to prevent downtown employees (and commuters) from parking on the residential street all day. On the weekends and between the hours of 5:00 p.m. – 3:00 a.m., and 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m., anyone may park here.

**Residential Parking 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m., M-F:** These spaces require drivers to display a City of Berwyn residential parking pass between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., Monday through Friday. The intent of this designation is to prevent people from driving in from other communities and parking all day to use the Metra commuter train, which is tempting to Riverside residents because the Metra zone changes at the Harlem station. These streets can be used by employees at local businesses during typical business hours, after 10:00 a.m.

**Residential Parking 3:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m., all days:** These spaces are found on the west end of the study area on Windsor Avenue between Wisconsin Avenue and Harlem Avenue. To park here between the hours of 3:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m., a driver must have a residential parking permit, acquired through the local police department. Between the hours of 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 a.m., anyone can use the spaces.

**Superzone Residential:** These spaces require drivers to display a City of Berwyn residential parking pass 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The permit is acquired through the police department and the driver must present proof of residency on a street with this designation.

**Depot Permit, 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., M-F:** Parking spaces zoned “Depot Permit” are intended for Metra commuters and Depot District employees. The permit is acquired through City Hall and costs \$375 for the year or \$100 per quarter. They are enforced between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. From 6:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m. on weekdays and on weekends from 6:00 a.m. to 3:00 a.m., anyone may park here. Depot Permit Parking is available along the north side of Windsor Avenue and the south side of Stanley, at parking spaces designated with signs. In addition, 300 parking spaces in the Municipal Parking Facility are designated for Depot Parking Permit holders.

**Free 2-hr parking:** These parking spaces are intended for shoppers and patrons of local businesses whose trip requires short term parking. These spaces are enforced between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. On the weekends (excluding 3:00 a.m. – 6:00 a.m.) and weekdays between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. (excluding 3:00 a.m. – 6:00 a.m.), anyone may park here for longer than 2 hours.

**Metered Surface Lot:** The small parking lot at the corner of 32<sup>nd</sup> Street and Oak Park Avenue is a public metered parking lot with 26 spaces. Metered spaces are paid for through an electronic pay box. Anyone can park here for two hours or less and the cost to park is \$0.25 / hour. Hours of enforcement are from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. On the weekends and between the hours of 5:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., anyone may park here for free.

**Private Surface Lot:** The private parking facilities are usually for the hospital, local businesses, or churches and are not available for the general public to use at any time.

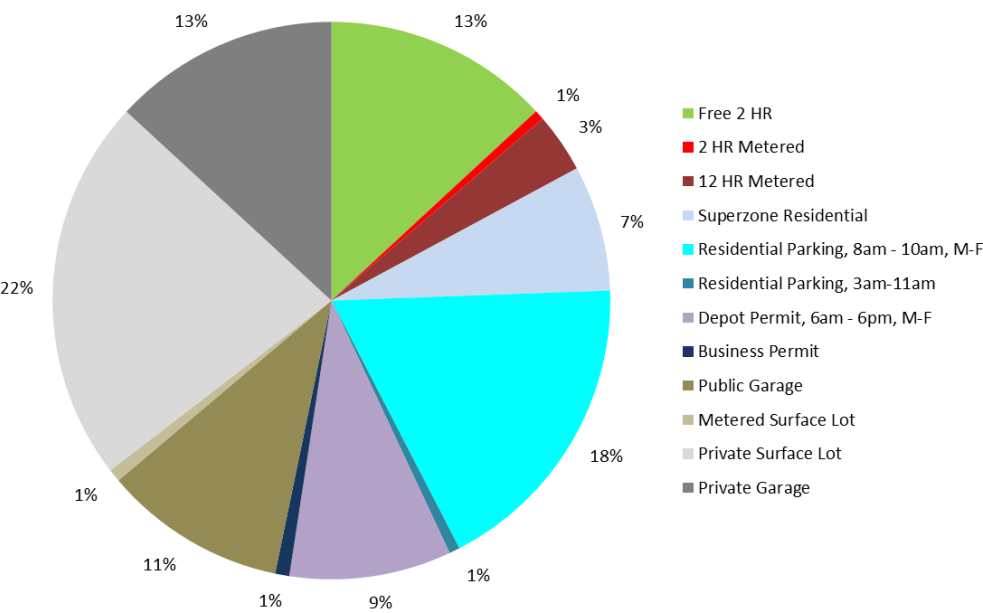
**Private Garage:** The private parking garage is owned and operated by MacNeal Hospital. Parking is for use by hospital visitors and employees.

**Public Garage:** Berwyn’s Municipal Parking Facility is located at Grove Avenue, north of 34th Street. The parking facility has four levels designed for Commuter Parking from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. To park on the first four levels requires either a Depot Parking Permit or that you pay for a minimum of eight hours of parking.

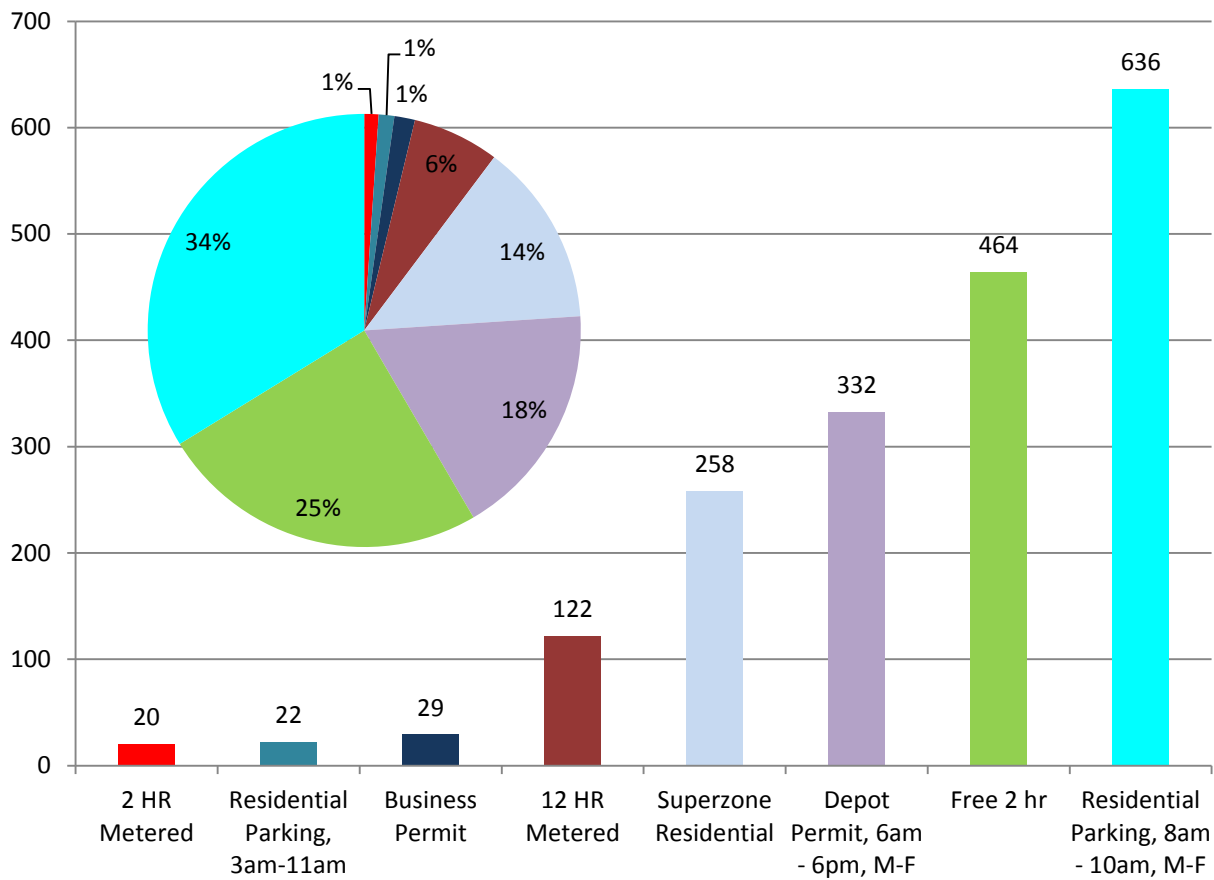
Most of the parking on the fifth level is designated for public parking that is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week at a cost of \$.25 per hour. Additionally, the public is allowed to park on the Commuter Parking levels (first four levels) after 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and all day Saturday and Sunday, but not for longer than 24 hours (with some exceptions).

In the study area of about 0.2 square miles, there are more than 3,600 parking spaces. The study area roughly covers streets within a 5-minute walk of the Berwyn Metra station, as well as the streets along the train tracks to the east and west. Over 1,200 spaces are in private surface lots or the MacNeal private parking garage and over 250 spaces are zoned “Superzone Residential” where only residents with permits for that block can park. That leaves roughly 2,000 parking spaces that can be used at various times of day, with various permits, and for differing lengths of stay (Figure 3 and Figure 4).

**Figure 3. Percentage of parking spaces by type of parking (On-street and Off-street)**



**Figure 4. Number of On-street Parking Spaces by Type**

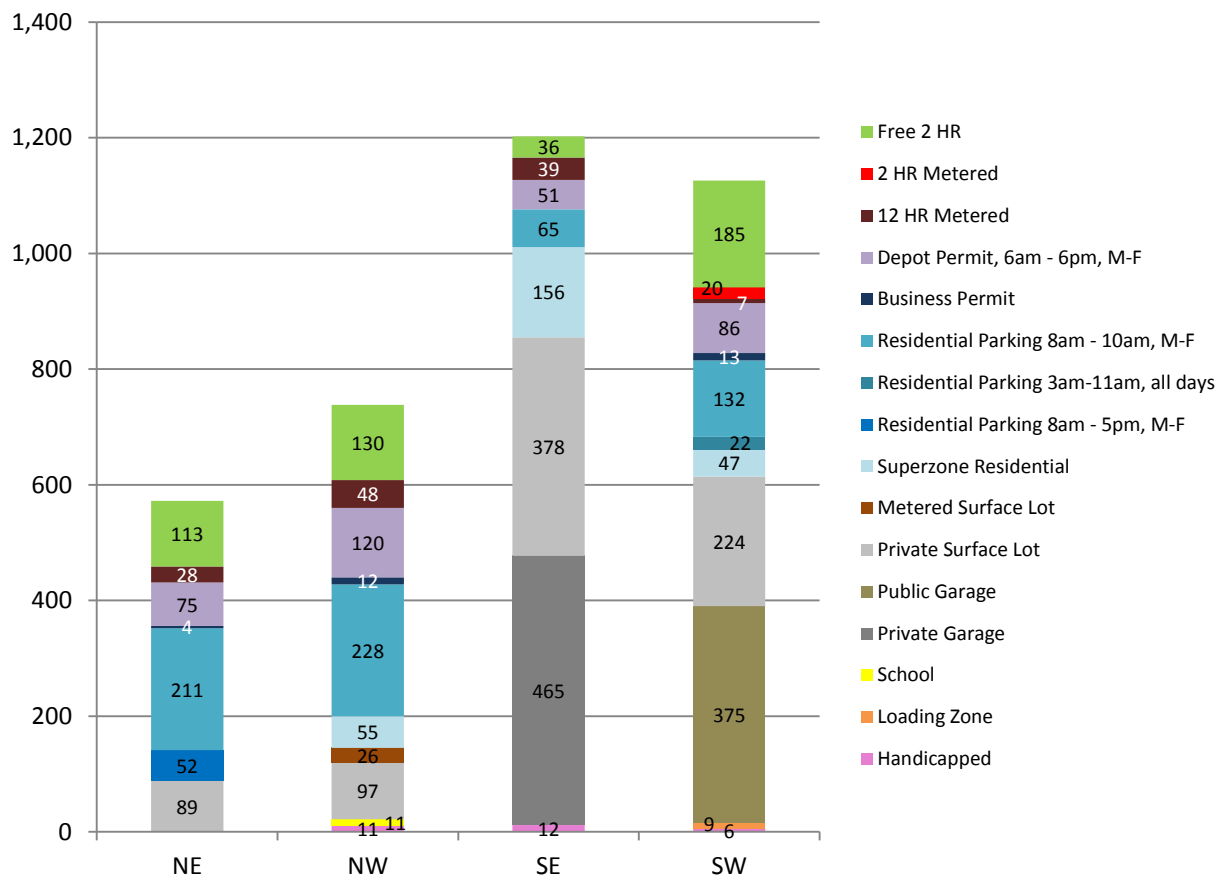


Due to frequent freight and commuter trains, and no grade-separated crossing, parking on one side of the tracks and walking to the other side of the tracks is an unattractive option for those who don't want to be delayed. For supply counts, the study area was divided into quadrants, with Oak Park Avenue dividing the east and west sides and the BNSF railroad tracks dividing the north and south (Figure 5). This helps to understand more localized patterns. The parking garages in the Southeast and Southwest quadrants, as well as large surface parking lots, provide about double the amount of parking than is found north of the tracks (Figure 6).

Figure 5. Parking Supply (by quadrant)



**Figure 6. Total on-street and off-street Parking Supply by type and quadrant**



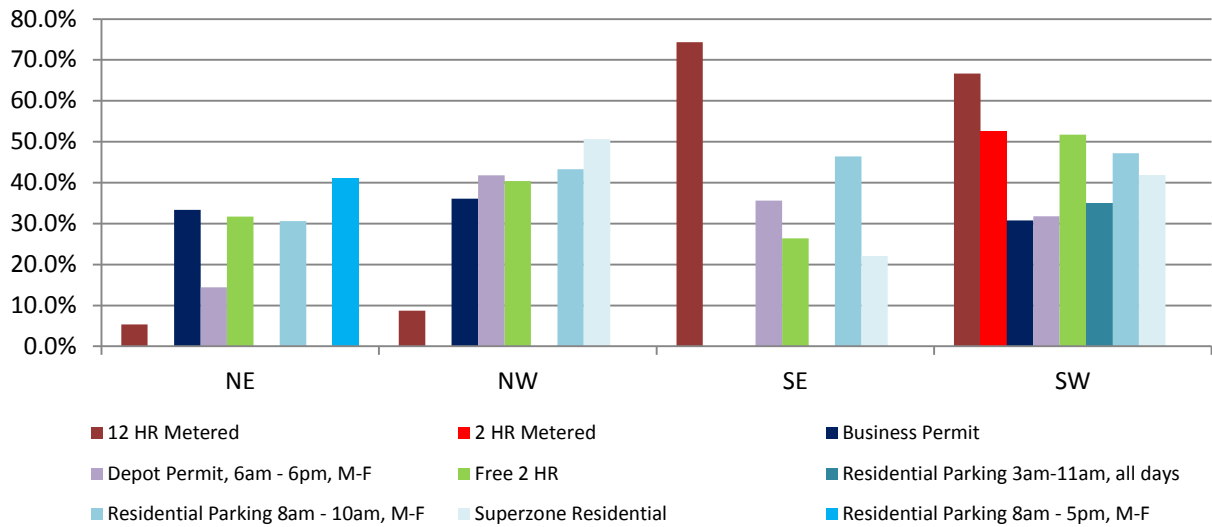
### 3.3 Parking Occupancy Survey

To understand where people park in Berwyn, staff counted the number of parked cars on street segments and in parking lots at various times of day. A parking occupancy survey helps to get a snapshot of the parking usage for a certain point in time. It is not a definitive picture of the daily parking conditions, but it helps to highlight problematic areas, areas of high demand, and areas that are underutilized. Parking conditions can change with special events, seasons, new businesses opening or closing, or other factors. Our surveys did not indicate many obvious patterns shown by time of day. This could be due to poor enforcement, odd hours of shift workers, or the absence of a significant “parking problem.” The more interesting data is found in the maps of average weekday occupancy.

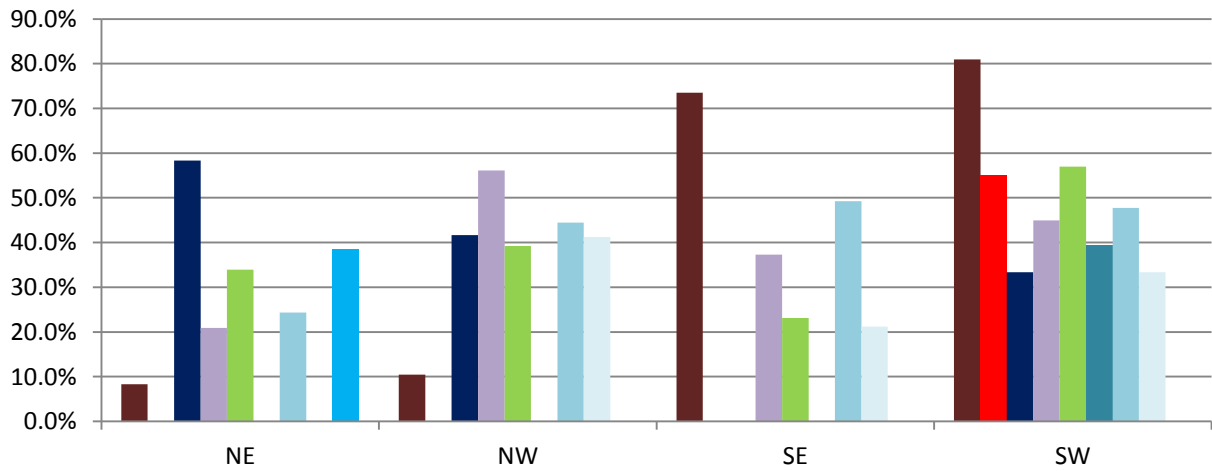
The average weekday parking occupancy by study area is about 40% for most street types (Figure 7); this number was slightly higher when the 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. counts were not included (Figure 8). It is also interesting to note that the 12-hour metered parking spaces north of the tracks have less than 10% average occupancy, while the 12-hour metered parking spaces south of the tracks have the highest average occupancy, between 60-80% occupied. This is likely due to their proximity to MacNeal Hospital, and employees or commuters who do not want to risk getting stuck on the other side of the tracks by a freight train.



**Figure 7. Average Parking Occupancy by subarea and type of parking**



**Figure 8. Average Midday Parking Occupancy by subarea and type of parking**



The following maps (Figure 9 and Figure 10) show line segments and surface parking lots color-coded by the average percentage of parked cars observed at various times of day.

Figure 9. Average Parking Occupancy (weekday)



Figure 10. Average Midday Parking Occupancy (weekday)



The first count was conducted at 7:00 a.m. on a weekday morning, followed by 10:00 a.m., noon, 4:00 p.m., and 7:00 p.m. The parking count on Saturday took place at noon. While parking occupancy will vary from day to day, month to month, or seasonally, these counts help to give a better general understanding of where people typically want to park. The times were chosen to reflect arrival and departure times of commuters, downtown employees, lunch patrons, and MacNeal shift times.

The percentage breakdowns used in the maps were chosen to show subtle variances in the data. The ideal occupancy rate should be about 85 percent. When the street (or lot) is 85 percent full, that means that there are many cars parked, but there are still one or two spaces available per block. When occupancy levels exceed 90 percent, this leads to “parking congestion,” where drivers circle the block in search of parking, or queue up to take available spots. Occupancy below 80 percent could indicate that people are abandoning the downtown area for other locations. Ideally, all the streets in the downtown core would be medium-orange, indicating a high level of street activity without complete parking congestion, in the range of 81 to 90 percent occupied. Blue shades indicate areas with 50 percent occupancy or less; beige to deep orange goes from 51% to 100%. Only one street segment (the 12-hour meters across from the hospital) had an average occupancy over 90%, but several had average midday occupancy rates exceeding 90%.

Weekday parking counts were kept separate from Saturday counts because the habits of weekday commuters have a significant impact on parking availability in the Depot District. Private parking lots were also included in the survey to compare with the City supply. Not all parking spaces were counted at all times of the survey. No parking counts were conducted on Sunday. The levels of the parking garages are shown with their individual occupancy rates because different people are allowed to park on different levels, so it was important to keep the data separate.

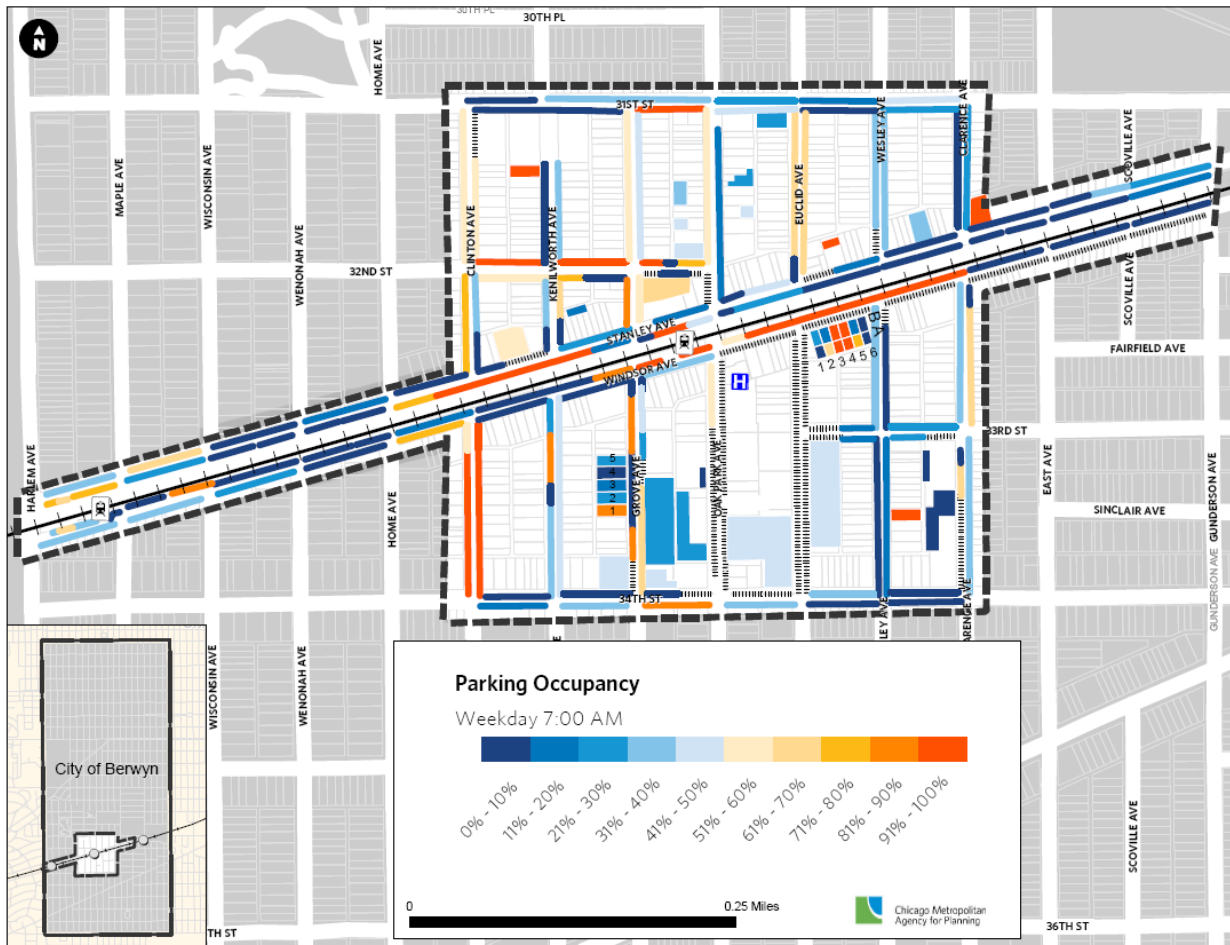
## Weekdays: Early morning

There is a hospital shift that starts at 7:00 a.m., so the 12-hour meter and Depot Permit spots south of the train tracks and closest to MacNeal hospital are at often full at 7:00 a.m. (Figure 11). Clinton Avenue south of Windsor may have higher occupancy rates because of the higher density of housing on this block, or it could be a block where Berwyn residents park to take Metra downtown. There are two trains to Chicago that have fewer stops between Berwyn and Union Station (Table 2), but the time savings are minimal (6:15 a.m. and 7:52 a.m.). The lower levels of the public parking garage are reserved for Metra commuters, explaining the orange in Level 1 at this hour. The deep orange on Stanley Avenue west of Kenilworth, and on Windsor east of Wesley, are Depot Permit spaces likely used by Metra commuters or downtown employees. Superzone streets have very low occupancy levels.

**Table 2. Metra Berwyn to Chicago Union Station weekday schedule (express trains shaded)**

Train #	1202	1206	1212	1222	1230	1244	1254	1260
	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
Harlem Avenue	5:33	6:15	6:32	6:57	7:14	7:52	8:19	9:13
<b>Berwyn</b>	<b>5:35</b>	<b>6:18</b>	<b>6:34</b>	<b>6:59</b>	<b>7:16</b>	<b>7:54</b>	<b>8:21</b>	<b>9:15</b>
Chicago Union Station	6:00	6:35	7:00	7:22	7:44	8:17	8:40	9:47

**Figure 11. Weekday Occupancy, 7:00 a.m.**

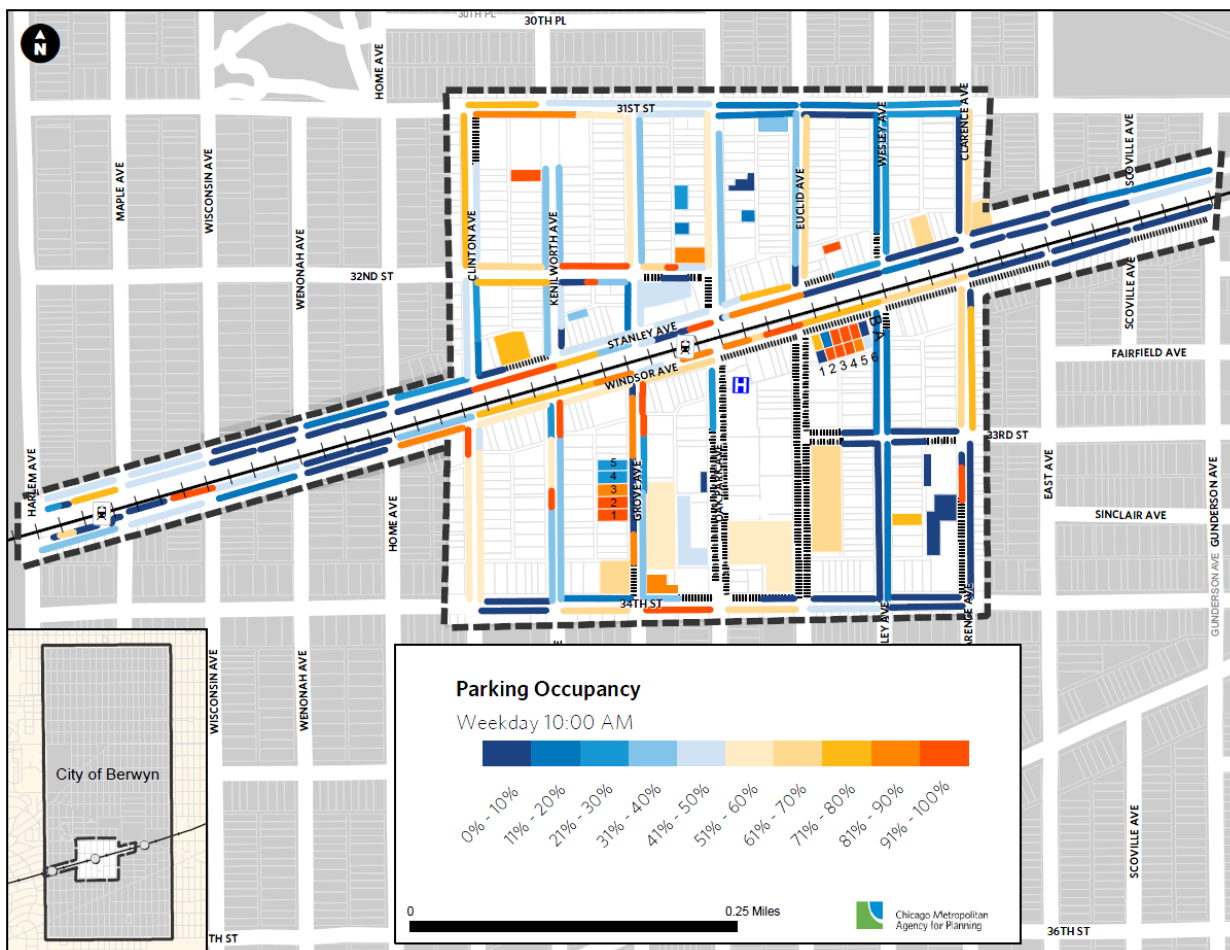


## Weekdays: Mid-morning

By mid-morning, the lower levels of the public parking garage are full while the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors are below 30% occupied (Figure 12). The spaces for the school are mostly full. The same Depot permit spaces on Stanley between Kenilworth and Clinton are still full, which would point to commuter usage. The next block west, however, has a lower occupancy than it did at 7:00 a.m. Windsor Avenue between Euclid and Clarence, north of the MacNeal parking garage has lower occupancy levels than it did at 7:00 a.m., which could be an indication that hospital shift workers are using the spaces (shifts change at 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.). Superzone streets continue to have very low occupancy levels.

Most surface parking lots are about half full; the metered public lot is at the ideal occupancy level between 81 and 90 percent full, indicating that the price is appropriate for the location.

**Figure 12. Weekday Occupancy, 10:00 a.m.**





## Weekdays: Noon

Midday is the most congested time period for the Depot District (Figure 13). The hospital parking lots are mostly full, and the MacNeal parking garage remains quite full with the exception of the top floor. The occupancy at the public parking garage remains the same – with lower levels full, top two levels below 30% occupied. Stanley and Windsor have very low occupancy levels to the east of Clarence and to the west of Clinton, with some exceptions. Clinton and Grove residential spaces fill up, and more people are parked along the south side of 34<sup>th</sup> Street (while the north side of 34<sup>th</sup> Street is empty). Superzone streets continue to have very low occupancy levels.

**Figure 13. Weekday Occupancy, 12 Noon**



## Weekdays: Afternoon

Later in the afternoon, it seems as though the 2-hour spaces along Stanley and Windsor have higher occupancy levels (Figure 14). People who park in these spaces at 4:00 p.m. can remain in the parking space until 3:00 a.m. because they are only enforced until 6:00 p.m. The hospital surface lots and MacNeal parking garage have lower occupancy rates than at noon. The public parking garage has much lower occupancy, which is likely due to early commuters returning from work (the earliest to arrive would occupy the 1<sup>st</sup> levels, which are the ones emptying out at this time). The public surface lot on 32<sup>nd</sup> Street is down to below 30 percent occupied. Occupancy rates on many of the residential streets went down from the rates at 12:30 p.m.

**Figure 14. Weekday Occupancy, 4:00 p.m.**





## Weekdays: Evening

As the evening hospital shifts gets started, the hospital surface lots fill up again, but the MacNeal garage remains mostly empty (Figure 15). All of Stanley Avenue is below 50 percent occupied. All Depot permit spaces are below 50 percent occupied. Residential streets have some increase in occupancy, especially near churches (inadvertently, the count was conducted on a Catholic holiday and while this may have affected the results, it is important to consider the parking challenges during these recurring events). The two-hour spaces on Windsor Avenue between Grove Avenue and Home Avenue continue to have higher occupancy than most areas in the Depot District, likely a result of restaurant and bar patrons. The large surface parking lots between Grove Avenue and Oak Park Avenue south of the tracks are emptied out, as is most of the public parking garage.

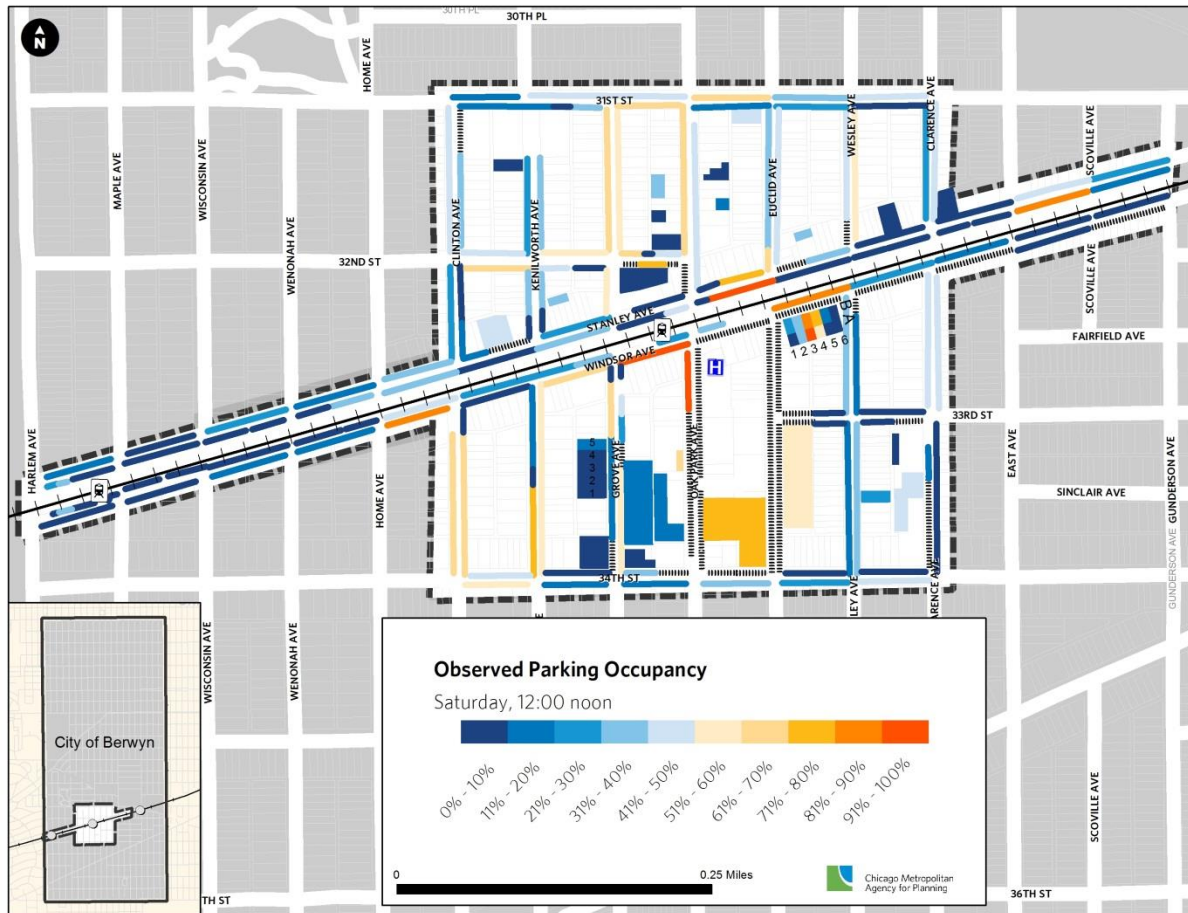
**Figure 15. Weekday Occupancy, 7:00 p.m.**



## Weekends

Most parking in the Depot District is below 70 percent occupied on Saturday at noon, with the exception of the parking spaces that are closest to the hospital (Figure 16). These spaces are not enforced for hourly restrictions and payment is not required on the weekends, which results in higher than average occupancy.

**Figure 16. Saturday Occupancy, 12 Noon**

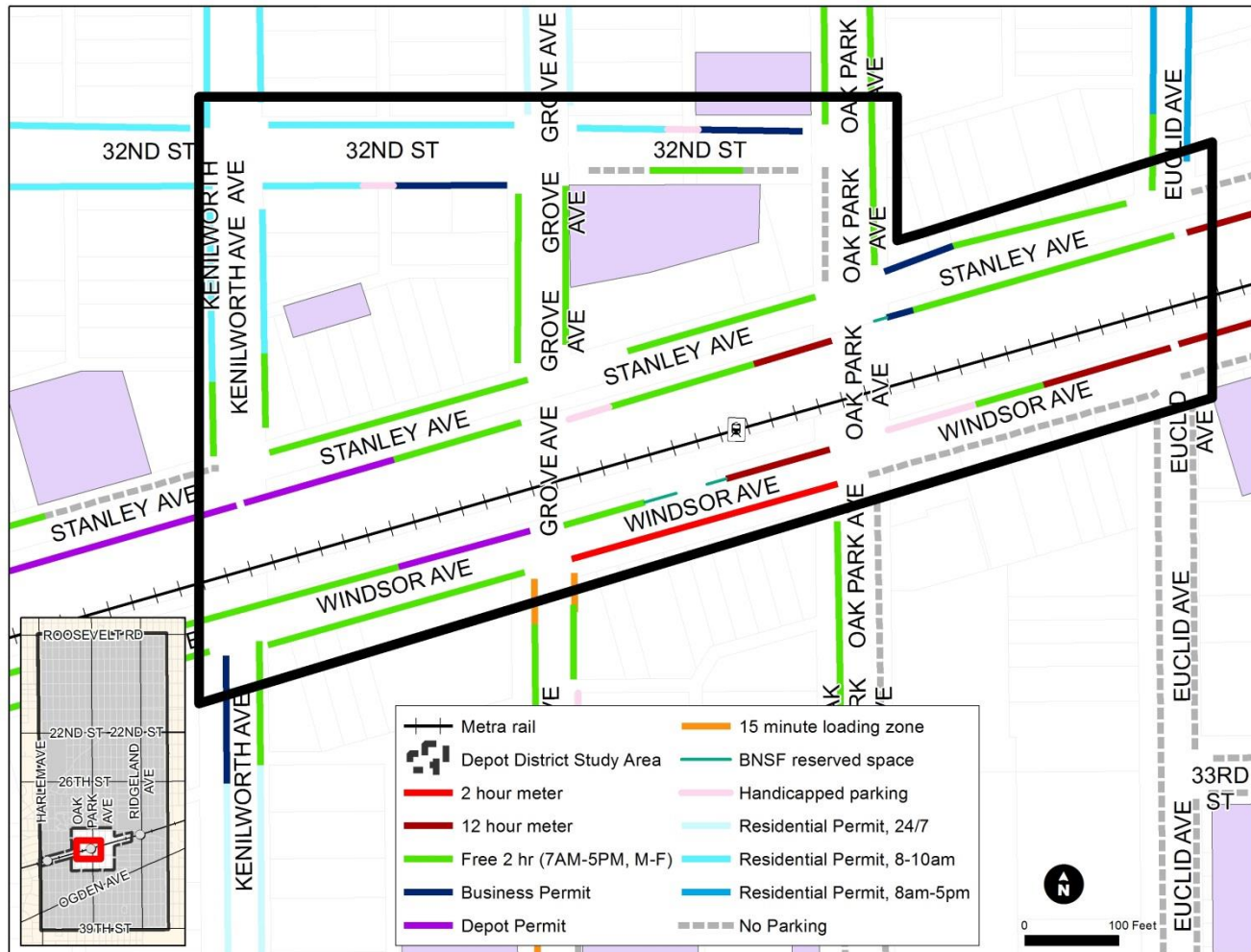


Interviewees reported that Sundays were less problematic for parking than Saturdays, and with a relatively low level of congestion on Saturdays, therefore no parking count was conducted on a Sunday.

### 3.4 Parking Turnover Survey

On Tuesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014, CMAP conducted a parking turnover study in the heart of Berwyn's Depot District. In order to determine the usage patterns associated with free, metered, and permit parking spaces, staff recorded license plate numbers of each car parked in the study area over an 8-hour period, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The resulting data allowed CMAP to calculate the average duration for which each space was used.

**Figure 17. Turnover Survey Area**



The maps in this section show the patterns of usage along the study area streets of interest: Windsor Ave., Stanley Ave., Grove Ave., Oak Park Ave., Kenilworth Ave., and 32<sup>nd</sup> St.

#### 3.4.1 Key findings

- Time limits and pricing are both intended to incentivize shorter parking stays, increase turnover, and allow a limited number of spaces to serve more users. In the most congested parts of Berwyn's Depot District, neither strategy is living up to its potential.
- Free 2-hour time limits appeared to be unenforced and were overstayed on every street except one; this is especially problematic along Windsor, where parking near businesses is relatively scarce.
- The 12-hour meters were only well-utilized on Windsor near MacNeal Hospital, presumably by MacNeal employees. Other 12-hour meters were rarely occupied, possibly because of the inconvenience of needing 12 quarters, regardless of parking duration.

Located just south of the BNSF Metra tracks, Windsor Avenue provides access to the Metra station, MacNeal hospital, and many small businesses, including restaurants and bars (Figure 18). Windsor features a variety of parking types, including 2-hour metered parking, 12-hour meters, 2-hour free parking, Depot permit parking, and handicapped spaces. Along the north side of Windsor (closest to the tracks), Depot permit spaces were occupied for an average of 4.5 hours, 12-hour metered spaces for 3.8 hours, and 2-hour free parking spaces for an average of 2.1 hours. Along the south side of Windsor (closest to businesses and MacNeal Hospital), cars parked in 2-hour free spaces for an average of 2.24 hours, and in 2-hour metered spaces for 2.16 hours. Despite repeated sightings of City of Berwyn parking enforcement employees in the metered area, drivers were observed “feeding the meter” rather than moving their cars at the time limit. Feeding the meter contravenes the primary purpose of parking meters: to enable more people to use the spaces by encouraging shorter stays. On a street like Windsor, where parking spaces close to businesses are often hard to find, ensuring turnover is of primary importance.

Located just north of the BNSF tracks, Stanley Avenue also functions as a commercial strip (Figure 19). Similar to Windsor, Stanley features a mix of Depot permit parking, free 2-hour spaces, and 12-hour meters, as well as handicapped parking. Along the north side of Stanley (closest to the businesses), cars stayed in free 2-hour spaces for an average of 1.6 hours. Along the south side (closest to the tracks), commuter permit spaces were occupied for an average of 5.3 hours, 12-hour metered spaces for 5.5 hours, and 2-hour free spaces for 2.0 hours. While the average is 2 hours for the 2-hour spaces, there are clearly a handful of offenders who are bringing up the average, while most stay for less than two hours. The two handicap spaces on Stanley were used for 3 and 5 hour durations, while business permit spaces were used for 1.1 hours at a time.

A one-block section of Grove Avenue was also examined (Figure 20). Just north of Stanley, this block is home to a bank, as well as several other businesses. Parking on the east side of Grove (closest to the bank) consists of 2-hour free parking spaces which were utilized for an average of 3.3 hours at a time; for 2-hour free spaces on the west side, this figure was 2.2 hours. For a street with businesses that cater to short-term trips, this lack of turnover is problematic, as cars left for hours reduce the parking available to actual customers, with six cars parked for more than seven hours.

One short block of Oak Park Avenue (from Stanley to 32<sup>nd</sup> Street) was surveyed (Figure 21). This block, adjacent to the Tastee Corner Café, has only 3 parking spaces (all free 2-hour), with one space that was vacant, one occupied for six hours, and one occupied for just over an hour.

On Kenilworth Avenue between Stanley and 32nd Street, most parking spaces utilize the Berwyn residential permit parking, with three cars parking in the free 2-hour spaces

**Figure 22).** On the east side of the street, the permit spaces were used for an average of 1.9 hours at a time. On the west side of the street, permit spaces were used for an average of 4.4 hours, while free 2-hour spaces were occupied for an average of 1.1 hours at a time. This is the only street in the study area where the average length of a stay in a 2-hour space was actually under two hours.

Located one block north of Stanley, 32<sup>nd</sup> Street contains a mixture of residential and commercial properties with a corresponding mix of parking types (Figure 23). Along the north side of the street between Oak Park and Kenilworth, most spaces are for residential permit parking, with nine spaces reserved for business permit parking. Here, business permit spaces were occupied for an average of 6.8 hours at a time, compared to 4.2 hours for the residential permit spaces. Along the south side of the street, business permit spaces were occupied for an average of one hour, residential spaces for seven hours, and one free 2-hour parking space was occupied for 7 hours. Despite the lone long-term parker, two of the three free parking spaces on 32<sup>nd</sup> Street remained unoccupied during the entire turnover study.



Figure 18. Windsor Avenue turnover

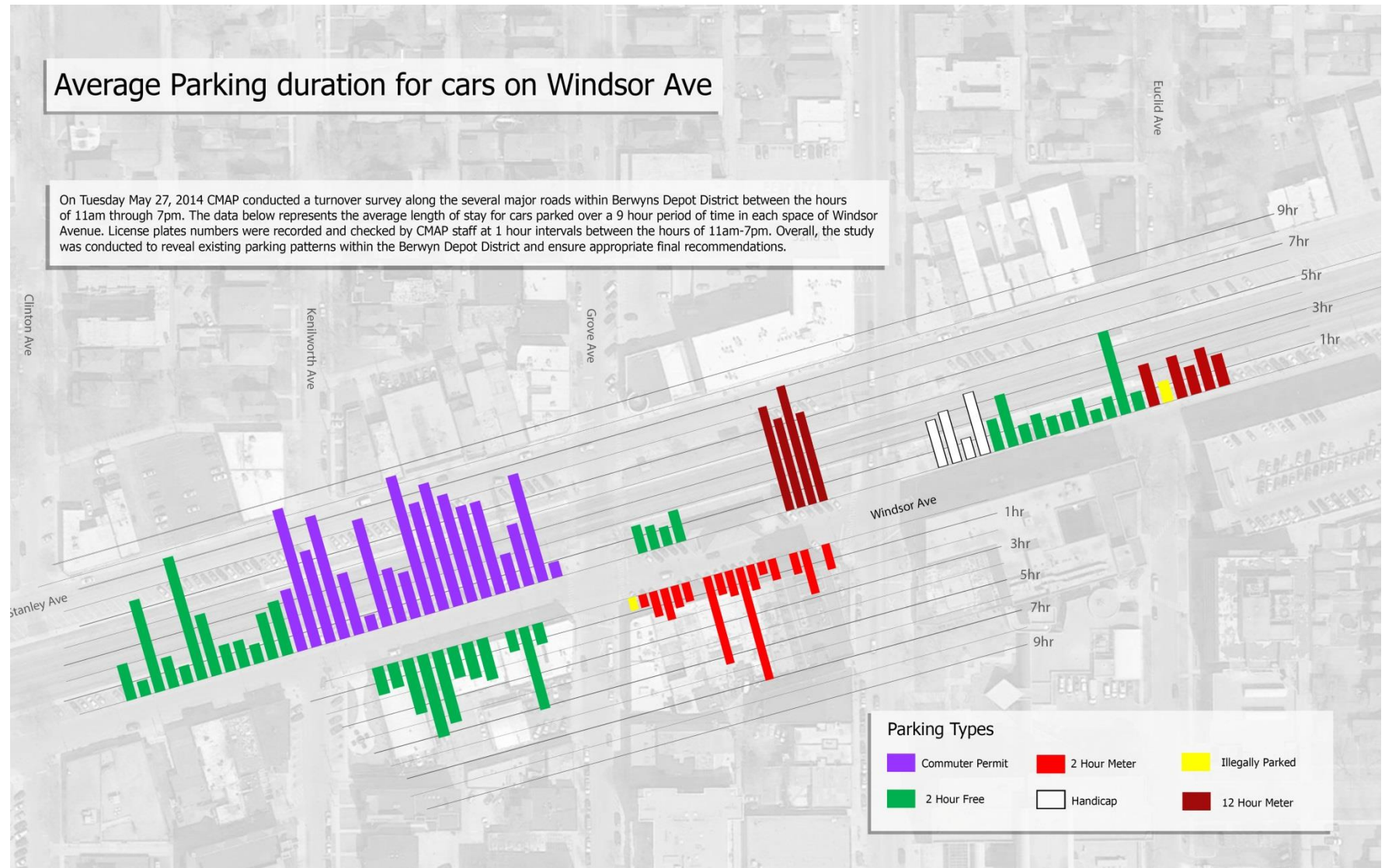
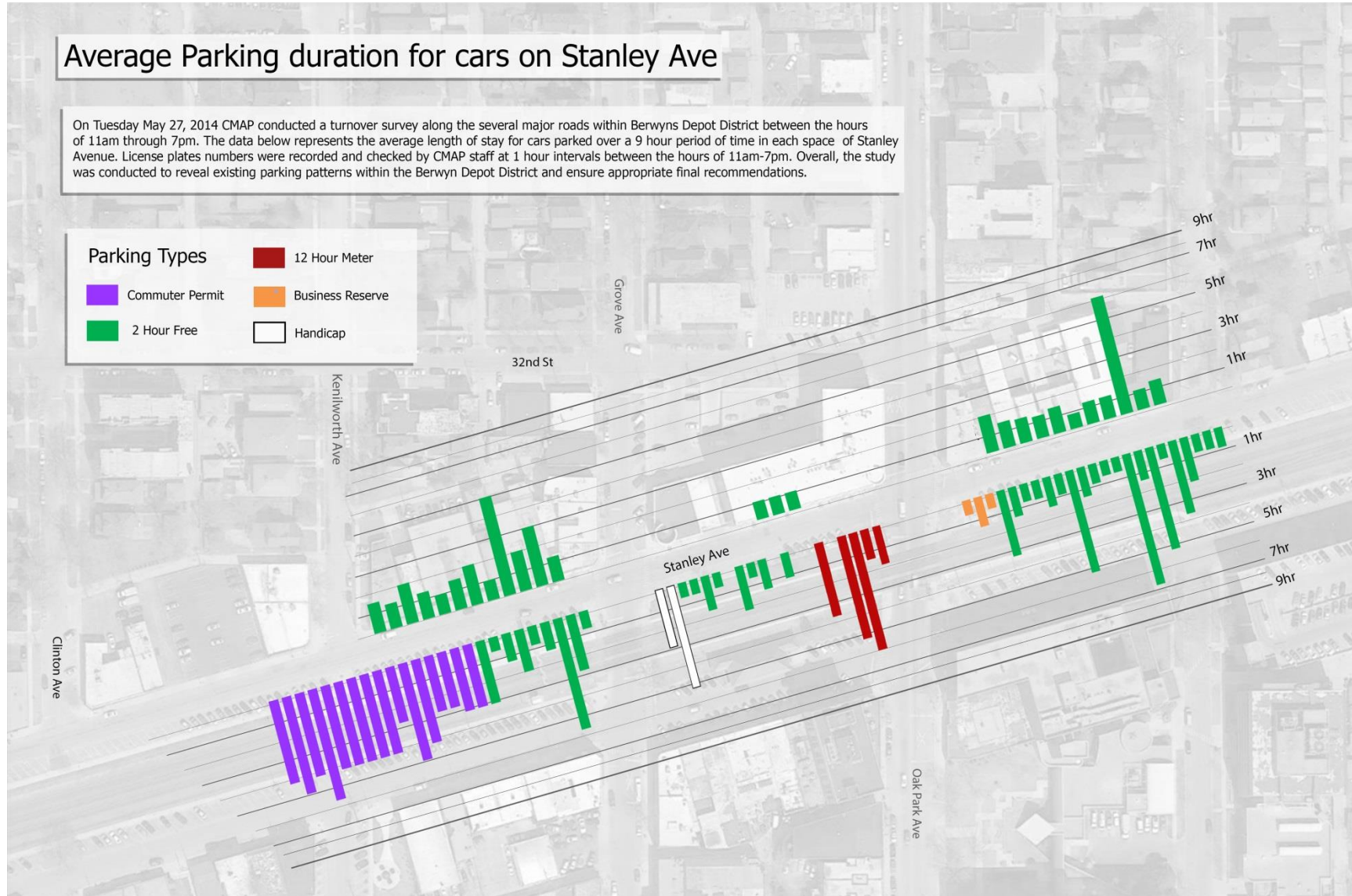


Figure 19. Stanley Avenue turnover





## Average Parking time per space, Grove Avenue

On Tuesday May 27, 2014 CMAP conducted a turnover survey along the several major roads within Berwyns Depot District between the hours of 11am through 7pm. The data below represents the average number of cars parked for a 9 hour period of time in each space of Grove Avenue. License plates numbers were recorded and checked by CMAP staff at 1 hour intervals between the hours of 11am-7pm. Overall, the study was conducted to reveal existing parking patterns within the Berwyn Depot District and ensure appropriate final recommendations.

The map shows the layout of Grove Avenue and its intersections with 32nd St, Kenilworth Ave, and Stanley Ave. The parking spaces are numbered 1 through 15. The bar charts show the average parking time per space for each of the 15 parking spaces. The left chart shows parking times from 1hr to 9hr, and the right chart shows parking times from 1hr to 9hr. The legend indicates that green bars represent 2 Hour Free parking.

Parking Space	1hr	3hr	5hr	7hr	9hr
1	1	1	1	1	1
2	1	1	1	1	1
3	1	1	1	1	1
4	1	1	1	1	1
5	1	1	1	1	1
6	1	1	1	1	1
7	1	1	1	1	1
8	1	1	1	1	1
9	1	1	1	1	1
10	1	1	1	1	1
11	1	1	1	1	1
12	1	1	1	1	1
13	1	1	1	1	1
14	1	1	1	1	1
15	1	1	1	1	1

Parking Types

- 2 Hour Free

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Figure 21. Oak Park Avenue turnover

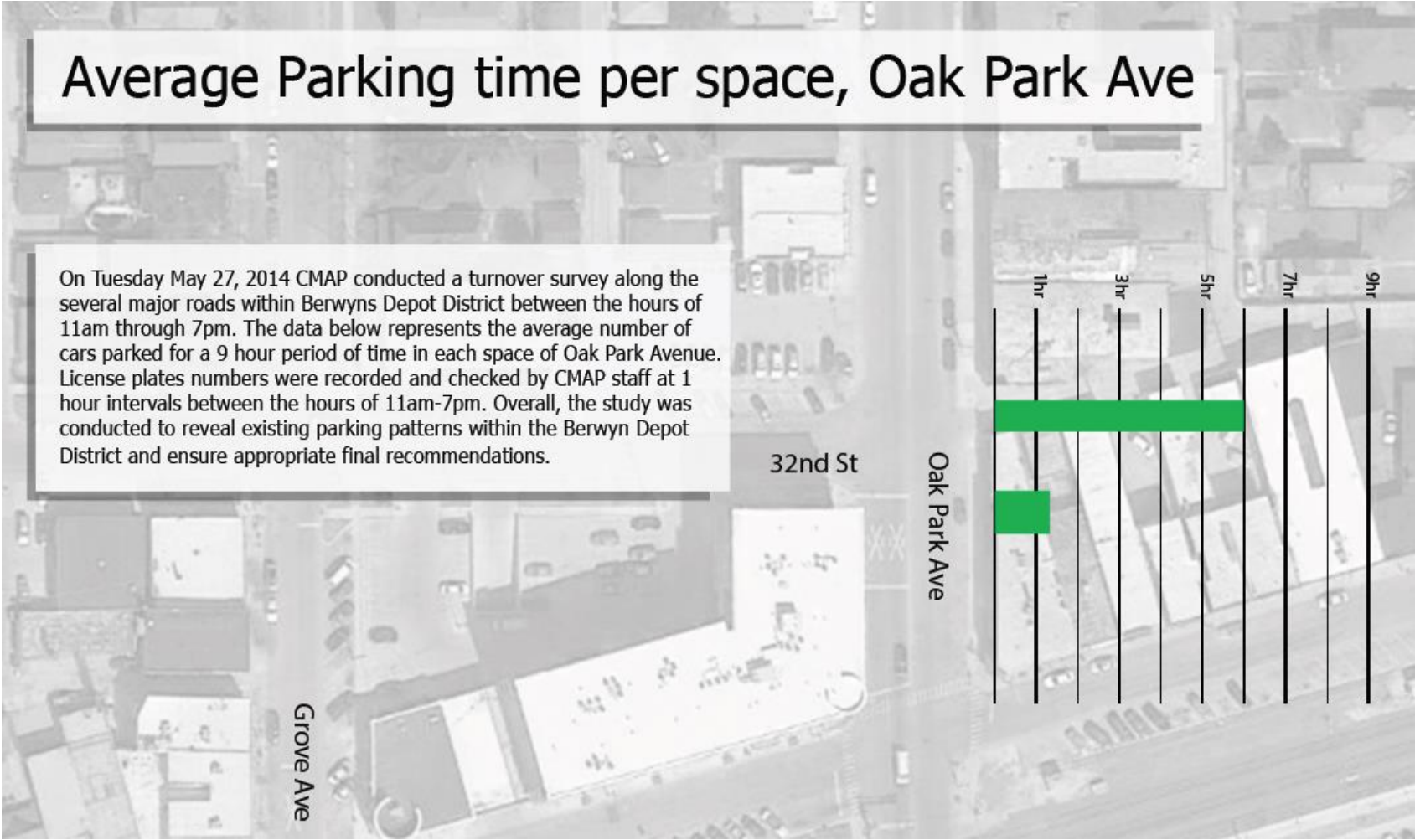


Figure 22. Kenilworth Avenue turnover

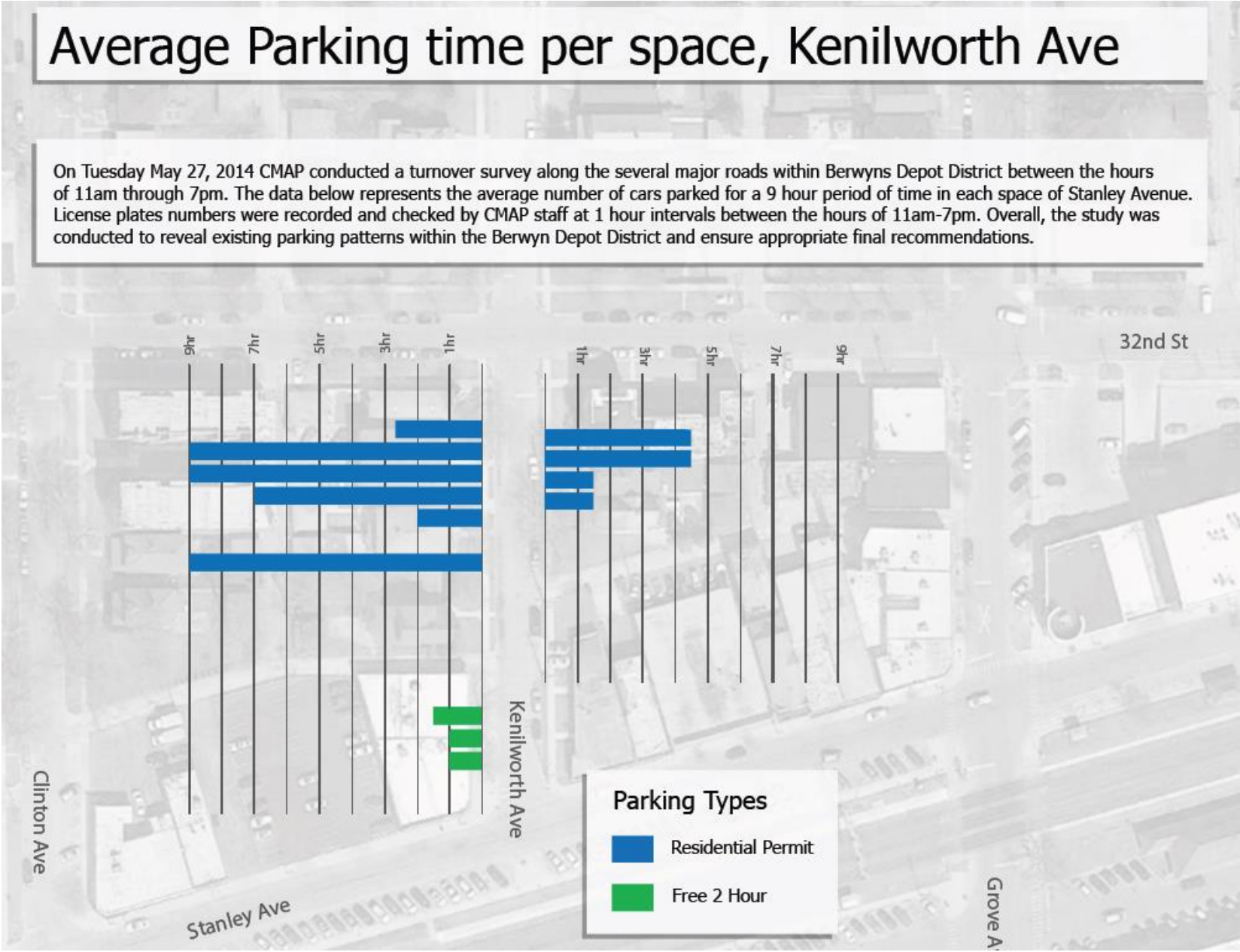
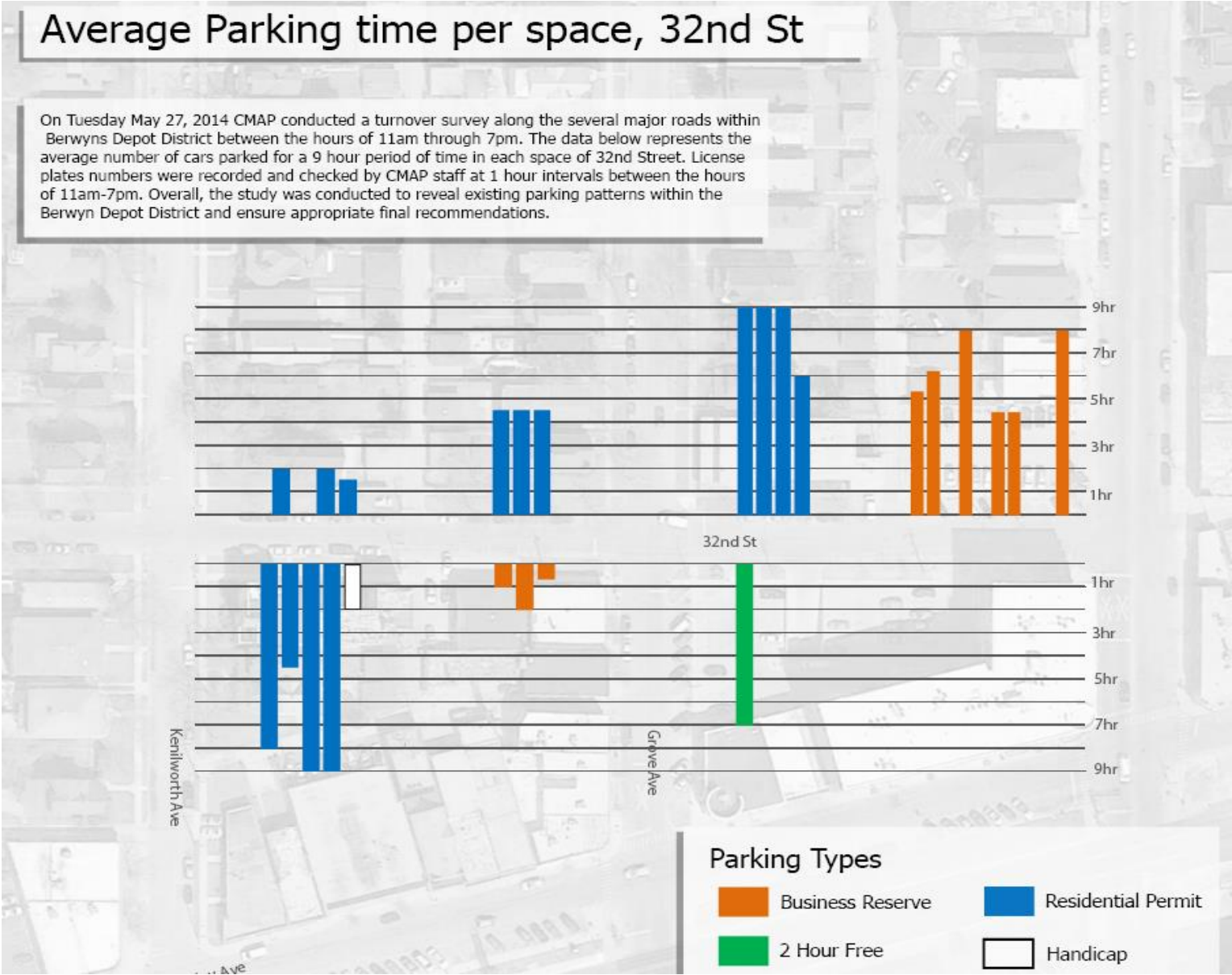


Figure 23. 32nd Street turnover



## Section 4: Transportation Infrastructure

Parking is just one part of the overall transportation infrastructure that is available to people in Berwyn. Parking often takes up half of the road area in the Depot District (on roads with two travel lanes and on-street parking), and sometimes more (angled parking or one-way streets with parking). When more people are walking, biking, and using transit, the demand for parking is lowered and the area can accommodate more people. For these reasons, an overview of transportation infrastructure in the Depot District is part of this report. Additional transportation information is included in the Supplemental Background Research section.

### 4.1 Key Findings

- Of the 15 north-south roads in the study area, there are only five at-grade crossings; there are also frequent freight trains passing through Berwyn. The rail activity and the lack of grade-separated crossings adds to traffic congestion, impacts parking habits, and disrupts Pace bus travel.
- For an inner-ring suburb with good transit coverage, the mode share of commuting workers in Berwyn is low for transit.
- Due to the zone configuration for Metra commuter rail tickets, some commuters who live outside Berwyn can drive to Berwyn and park for cheaper tickets. The Metra stations in Berwyn are in Zone B, while Riverside is Zone C, with higher fares to downtown. The difference in cost of a monthly Metra pass to Chicago is \$35.75.
- The entire Depot District study area is within a reasonable walking distance from the Berwyn Metra train station. There is a solid foundation for creating a robust walking and bicycling network, but Berwyn needs to build upon connections to neighboring communities and regional trails for biking.
- According to 2006 data, most Metra riders access the stations in Berwyn by walking (42%) or driving alone (30%) and commuter parking is provided at the Metra stations although the parking areas are not fully utilized.
- Since Metra's last survey in 2006, more riders are arriving at the station via walking, biking, and transit and fewer riders are driving alone or being dropped off.
- The average weekday ridership on Pace bus route 311, which runs along Oak Park Avenue, is 1500 passengers. Route 302 - Ogden/Stanley, which runs along northern side of the BNSF tracks within the Depot District, has an average weekday ridership of 649 passengers.
- The Berwyn Metra station is the most frequently used of the three stations in the community, and this is likely due to several factors in combination:

- Higher density location: The Berwyn station is centrally located in the community and has a higher residential density than the other stations and a mix of uses, which makes it the most convenient for more people and offers a variety of nearby amenities; commuters can get coffee or breakfast in the morning and pick up dry cleaning or get groceries on the way home.
- More frequent service: During the morning peak commute time (6:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m.), the Berwyn station has 22 scheduled stops, compared to 21 for Harlem Avenue and eight for LaVergne
- More parking: the Berwyn station has 530 permitted spaces for Metra commuters, compared to 172 at LaVergne and 156 at Harlem Avenue station.
- Pace bus feeder service: Route 311 Oak Park Avenue brings commuters from Chicago, Oak Park, Forest View, Stickney, Lyons, and McCook to the Berwyn Metra station.

## Looking Forward

While the Depot District does not have the parking challenges found in larger communities or in other retail-heavy downtowns, the concentrated parking challenges are still a drag on the overall economic activity of the area.

MacNeal Hospital brings many positive contributions to the community, but a large staff of employees all leaving and arriving around the same time presents traffic and parking challenges. There is also a strong concentration of medical-related offices in the Depot, whose hours overlap with the peak hours of many other downtown businesses, adding to parking challenges. As the Depot continues to grow and add new businesses, the existing parking problems will only become worse without policy and enforcement changes.

The challenge for Berwyn is balancing commuters with hospital employees, while maintaining available parking spaces in front of local businesses. MacNeal Hospital is working to address the parking problems for their staff by providing a free shuttle service to and from a remote parking lot and also planning for additional structured parking with new development. The community would also benefit if the hospital were to provide other incentives to non-single occupant vehicle travel. Priority parking for car-poolers, reduced or free Metra and Pace passes, and payment for employees who ride bicycles to work, are some options that have proven to reduce parking demand for employers.

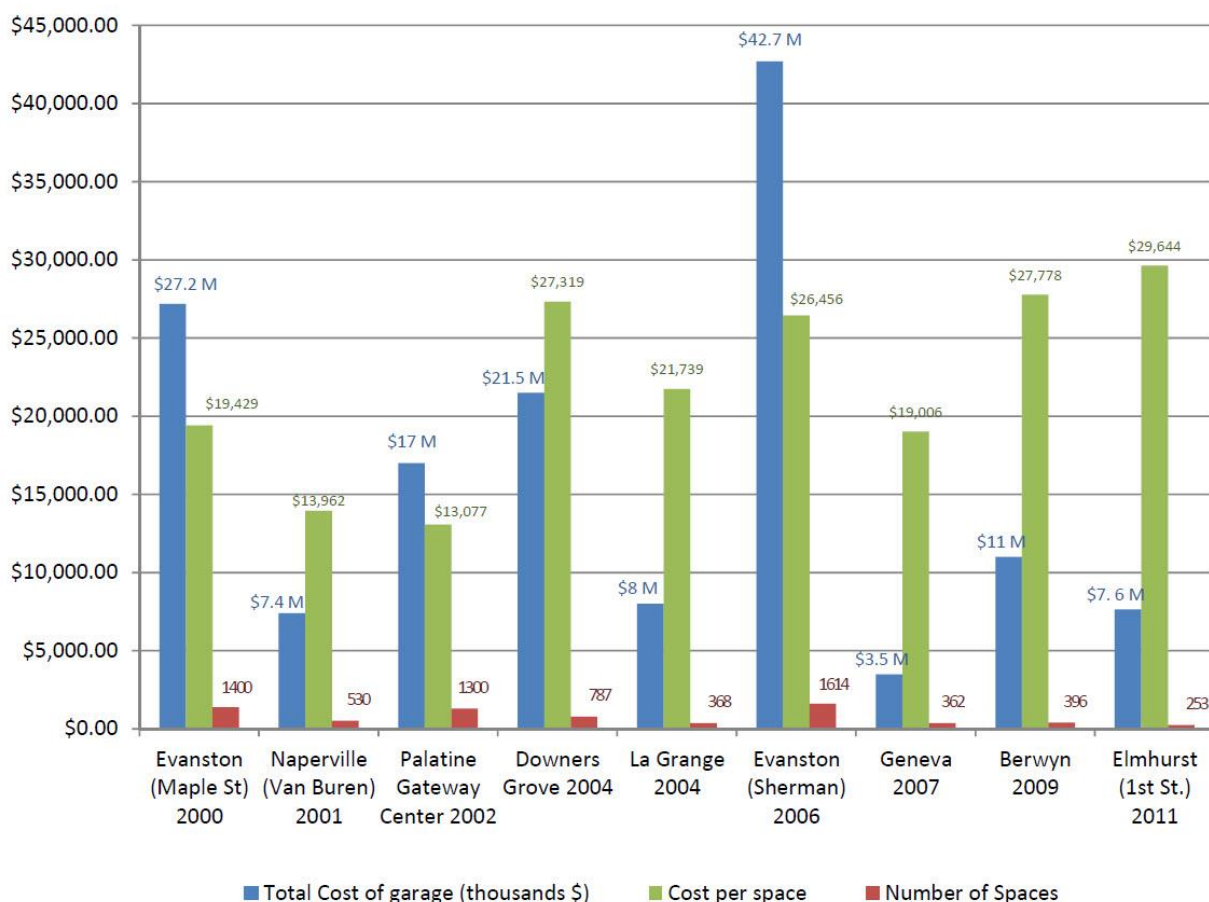
A small shift in the habits of Depot District employees and customers could eliminate parking congestion in the core streets. Without understanding the complexities of parking and its role in the transportation system, people often say, “Just build more parking!” At \$30,000 per space for a simple above-ground structure (Figure 24), parking garages are expensive and rarely pay for themselves. The management of parking supply affects the livability and walkability of the downtown. Building additional parking without properly managing the existing supply can induce driving and increase parking demand, leading to shortages even after having built a garage. For example, the zone layout for Metra trains to Chicago makes Berwyn a desirable commuter location; additional parking may attract more



Metra commuters. Conversely, managing the existing supply can be a cost-effective way to reduce demand or increase the attractiveness of underutilized spaces.

Structured parking can, however, complement parking management and encourage drivers to go directly to a garage rather than circling for a space. Berwyn is lucky to have a garage to add to its parking management toolkit. The garage is, however, underutilized (except during winter when there is a lot of snow on the ground) and without subsidizing maintenance and operations costs, it is not financially sustainable at current rates. Construction of new parking garages is recommended when the price that drivers are willing to pay in the most desirable spaces on-street can cover the daily maintenance and operational cost of a space in a structure, which is at least five dollars.<sup>1</sup> With a coordinated system of on-street and off-street priced parking, revenue from on-street spaces can be used to pay for debt financing, operations, and maintenance fees for a structure. Since most drivers still prefer to park directly in front of where they are going, the prices in the garage can be lower than on-street prices to encourage longer-term garage parking, and turnover of on-street spaces.

**Figure 24. Public Parking Garages in northeastern Illinois: construction costs, cost per space, and number of spaces**



<sup>1</sup> This number was calculated using data from 13 local municipal garages constructed since 2000, including Berwyn. It calculates the minimum weekday rate needed to recoup expenses over 40 years at a 4% interest rate. It includes a monthly maintenance cost of \$33 per space, 23 days of paid parking per month, assumes a full garage, and is rounded to the nearest dollar.

Berwyn is a unique, historic community, with boutique local businesses, extensive medical facilities, and is an ideal location for people commuting to Chicago. Based on the data and information gathered for this Existing Conditions Report through discussions with City residents, stakeholders, officials and staff as well as the research conducted, the Depot District Parking Management Plan serves an opportunity to create an even better Depot District. The priority issues to be addressed by the plan are: improving and simplifying user information, improving enforcement, use of new technology to improve efficiency of parking management and customer satisfaction, increasing use of underutilized spaces while reducing congestion in the area around the hospital, continued pursuit of transit-supportive development, and encouragement of alternative modes of transportation and carpooling through financial programs and infrastructure improvements.

# Appendix: Supplemental Background Research

This content is available as a PDF on the Project Page:

<http://www.cmap.illinois.gov/programs-and-resources/Ita/berwyn-parking>